

Prepare the Way of the Lord
Sunday, December 24, 2023
Advent IV - Love

Welcoming & Announcements

Centring Music (Chime Choir) Away In A Manger
J. E. Spilman, Arr. by Frances L. Callahan

Lighting of the Advent Candle

On this fourth Sunday in Advent,
we light this candle and name it Love.
As we light this candle, we remember our commitment
to bring love to all through our caring as disciples of Christ.

**O God come, travel with us
as we prepare the way for Advent Love.**

Choral Response Prepare the Way of the Lord
(Voices United 10)

*Words: Isaiah 40:3; adapt. Michael Burkhardt 1990; Music: Michael Burkhardt 1990
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Prepare the way of the Lord!
Prepare the way of the Lord!
Make a straight path for him, make a straight path;
prepare the way of the Lord!

Opening Hymn Once in Royal David's City
(Voices United 62)

*Words: Cecil Frances Alexander 1848, alt.
Music: Henry John Gauntlett 1849; harm. Arthur Henry Mann; desc. David Willcocks 1970
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- 1 Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattleshed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.
- 2 He came down to earth from heaven
who, with God, is over all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall.
There among the poor and lowly
lived on earth our Saviour holy.
- 3 For he is our lifelong pattern;
daily, when on earth he grew,
he was tempted, scorned, rejected,
tears and smiles like us he knew.
Thus he feels for all our sadness,
and he shares in all our gladness.
- 4 And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love;
for that child who seemed so helpless
is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

Advent Prayer

Anthem Bethlehem's Gift

Don Besig & Nancy Price

A Time to Wonder

Scripture Reading

Luke 1:26-38

Choral Response I Know Your Word (More Voices 108)

*Words: Psalm 119:105, adapted by Simeí Monteiro; English trans.
Simeí Monteiro and Joan Sutton; Music: Simeí Monteiro
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I know your Word, your Word is a lamp to my feet, O God.
I know your Word, your Word is a lamp to my feet, O God.
I know your Word is a lamp, O God, to light my path forever.
I know your Word is a lamp, O God, to light my path forever.

Reflection "Prepare the Way for Love"

**Hymn of the Day There was a Child in Galilee
(Dreaming Mary) More Voices 134**

*Words and Music; Janet Gadeski, 2005 arr. Patricia Wright, 2006
Words and Music ©Janet Gadeski, The United Church of Canada Foundation
Arrangement © 2006 Patricia Wright
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1 There was a child in Galilee
who wandered wild along the sea.
A holy child, alone was she,
and they called her Dreaming Mary.
And she dreamed, rejoicing in her saviour;
she dreamed of justice for the poor.
She dreamed that kings oppressed no more
when she dreamed, that Dreaming Mary.

2 One holy day an angel came
with voice of wind and eyes of flame.
He promised blessed would be her name
when he spoke to Dreaming Mary.
Then she spoke, rejoicing in her saviour.
She spoke of justice for the poor.
She spoke that kings oppressed no more
when she spoke, that Dreaming Mary.

3 And did she dream about a son?
And did he speak, the angel one?
We only know God's will was done
in the son of Dreaming Mary.
Then she prayed, rejoicing in her saviour.
She taught him justice for the poor.
She taught that kings oppressed no more
when she taught, that Dreaming Mary.

4 Then Jesus grew in Galilee,
they wandered wild along the sea.
Now he calls to you and me
to dream with Dreaming Mary.
And we dream, rejoicing in our saviour.
We dream of justice for the poor.
We dream that kings oppress no more
as we dream with Dreaming Mary.

Invitation to Offering

Offertory Music (Johanna de Leeuw)
The Snow Carol (Still, Still, Still)

German Carol, Arr. by Audrey Snyder

**Choral Response Come Touch Our Hearts
(More Voices 12, v. 1)**

*Words and music: Gordon Light, 2002; arr. Andrew Donaldson, 2002
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1 Come touch our hearts
That we may know compassion,
from failing embers build a blazing fire;
love strong enough
to overturn injustice,
to seek a world more gracious,
Come touch and bless our hearts.

Offering Prayer

When we reach out in love and understanding to others,

Love is your gift to us.

When we answer your Gospel in our giving,

Love is your gift to us.

When we pledge ourselves to your direction,

Love is your gift to us.

Joys & Concerns

Pastoral Prayers & The Lord's Prayer

Parting Hymn **Good Christian Friends, Rejoice** (Voices United 35)

Words: Latin, 14th-century; trans. John Mason Neale 1853, alt.

Music: German melody; harm. Gary Alan Smith 1988

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- 1 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice!
Give ye heed to what we say: News! News!
Jesus Christ is born today.
Ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!
- 2 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice!
Now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy! Joy!
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He hath opened heaven's door,
and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

- 3 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice!
Now ye need not fear the grave: Peace! Peace!
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Benediction

Postlude

Angels from the Realms of Glory

based on Regent Square by Henry Thomas Smart; arr. by Benton Price

Worship Leaders – Pastor Beth Parsons
Music Leader – Sharon Prindle-Collins
Chime Choir lead by Margaret Chambers
Flutist– Johanna de Leeuw
Welcoming – Stephen Godfrey
Greeters – Karen Strawn Samis and Bill Samis
Advent Prayer – Rosalie Knogler
Scripture Reader – Carol Paton
Offering Invitation and Prayer – Peggy Dayton
Technical Support – Sam Boehner and Karen Clark
Fellowship Time – Men's Breakfast Group

*Children and Youth are invited to remain in the service.
Special program materials are available at the table
on the right side of the Sanctuary.*